/15 cont./

585 white cotton sleeping blanket, various colored cloths and panties,
[583] some earthenware, such as bowls and plates, iron pots and pans,
and the like, while he is obligated on the occasion to provide for
an ample supply of strong drink and sugar wine.

They do not have festivities, games, or dancing in connection with their marriages.

586 If a marriage is dissolved, then each of the two parties again goes to his own family; in case those concerned in it and the elders disapprove of this, however, it happens that man and wife are forced to continue to live with each other, especially when there are no substantial reasons and grievances.

593 The man is obligated to provide his wife or his wives with food, clothing, and ornaments; she, to follow the man everywhere, to cook for him, to wash, and to take care of the housekeeping.

264 The wives are neat in an exemplary fashion; plates, bowls,
252 and pans are always kept extremely clean, and they also see to it that everything is extremely clean in connection with cooking.

841 If they find themselves in a period of menstruation, they
302 indicate this immediately to the husband by withdrawing from his dwelling and staying in seclusion with other women; they neither cook nor do the least thing for him in this state, do not even come within sight of him, and remain secluded to the end; when they have cleaned and dressed themselves, they decorate their shoulders and arms with white stripes as a token /16/ that they have again
[305] returned to their normal state. The stripes are made by mixing
[124] pounded adroe (1) with ground chalk and water.

1. A tuberous root-stalk from the Cyperus rotundus L.

Sometimes they also smear the forehead and the neck in this way and appear thus before their husbands.

841 During their seclusion another woman, who is a member of
571 the family or possibly a female friend, daily prepares and brings the
252 food, which, however, is at the expense of the secluded wife. They perform this service for each other mutually.

/17 cont./

101 103 175 113 1. Archives du Ministère de la France d'Outre-Mer. Guyane /Archives of the Ministry of Overseas France, Guiana/. A3-92.

611 /18/ Villages and Kin Groups

Among all the kinship systems which existed in the African tribes from which they issued, the Refugee Blacks came back unanimously, and from the beginning, to matrilineal filiation.

571 613 643 Their social system is symbiotic, under the authority of the grand man, of a certain number of localized matrilineal kin groups.

613 Matrilineal kin groups of the Boni. With the Boni the basic grouping is the lineage, in the rigorous sense of the term, understanding by that all descendants in maternal line from a single ancestress.

To designate the kin groups the Boni employ almost interchangeably the words lo (troop, band) and bêê, womb. In fact these expressions correspond to two variant interpretations of the same notion:

614 lo: matrilineage in the widest sense, understanding by that all persons knowing that they are issue of the same ancestress, even if the genealogical ties are forgotten, and even if these persons are scattered in several villages under different authorities;

lo: lineage fraction grouped in one village and constituting a distinct social unit.

The lineage bears a name whose origin is forgotten by present-day Boni: some of these names allude to a plantation or to a slave-owner, for example Lapé (La Paix, a plantation of the Cottica River); as for others, the name of the founding ancestress may be involved. Example: Kawina (name of the lineage constituting the village of Papaïkou).

/19 cont./

413 421 591 The principle of localization of matrilineal kin groups, each in a separate village, continues respected. However, as in all African populations, the actual structure is noticeably different from the theoretical organization:

1st. Fragments of paternal kin groups, as well as several small groups of heterogeneous origin, insufficient in number to form a separate unit, have been agglomerated with the lo. Such is the case for example of the Tolina lineage, a small group which fled from Suriname at the end of the 19th century and agglomerated with the Papa'lanon lo;

[519] 2nd. Scissions have been produced within the lo as a result of disagreements. A group issuing from the Papalisan lo founded Wéiti village in the Lower Maroni beside Apatu. A group issuing from the Kotika lo founded Ma Imima village in the same region. Finally, from the Dipélu II lo a group separated which settled in Asisi. Asisi village is thus in fact nowadays the juxtaposition of three villages: Asisi-Dju, Asisi-Awaca Bakka, Asisi-Dipélu II, each having its organization and its separate territory.

[829] These scissions have no appreciable repercussion on the social life of the Boni, for the groups thus separated from the lo, in addition to being very small in numbers, are not recognized by [869] the grand man as distinct social units. They remain subject to the head of the lo to which ancestor worship attaches them.

361 413 421 Besides the residence villages, a certain number of Boni have personal farming habitations distributed on the lands of their lineage along both banks of the river and on the islands. These habitations designated by the word kâpu, camp, have no permanent character; their existence does not violate the principle of localization of the lineage; each Boni is obliged at least in principle to build a house in his native village and to live in it part of the year.

[429] [978] The village of origin of each /20/ lineage is called "great village": it is there that the members of the group meet to pray to the ancestors in front of the fraga tiki.

/20 cont./

613 Thus the lo appears to us above all as a social and political
• 971 unit, based in principle on matrilineal relationship but easily able to welcome heterogeneous elements. It is the framework by means of which the individual is integrated into the collectivity.

614 Functions of the lineage (bɛɛ).

—Members of the same bɛɛ form a joint group from the legal point of view, even if they do not live in the same village and are under different authorities. They recognize a common legal responsibility; for example, they are obliged, at least in principle, to pay the debts contracted by one of them. Reciprocally, the inheritance of one of them is shared among them all.

614 —They have the same religious responsibility, that is, they
784 are subject to the same kunu. The kunu is a curse called down upon a group by a divinity since an ancient era. It is transmitted exclusively by the mother. We shall show in the remainder of this work the considerable importance of this notion in the social life of the Refugee Blacks.

614 —They cannot (at least in principle) contract a union with one another. The bɛɛ thus constitutes in principle the unit subject to the law of exogamy.

[835] An offense against exogamy, pikadu, incest in the wide sense, is regarded as very grave.

613 Functions of the lo: The lo transposes onto the material plane the legal principles resulting from the conception of the lineage: joint rights over land, common legal responsibility. Each of them forms a social unit in principle sufficient unto itself, possessing an ancestor worship peculiar to it, a head acting the role of ancestor priest and judge, materially grouped in one village, enjoying exclusive rights over a well-defined soil.

/20 cont./

613 591 We have said that the recently founded lineages, being of only very small size, cannot constitute a distinct social unit and are placed under the authority of one of the lo heads. That is not a condition imposed by force or any moral coercion whatever, but a practical social necessity. A lineage, reduced in numbers though it may be, keeps in the eyes of the Refugee Blacks imprescriptible collective rights; and if these members agree to group in a separate village and work separate soil, nobody will stand in their way.

128 613 614 [115] [829] Such are the elements which stand out after a first study of the kin groups as it can be deduced from interrogating the heads of these units. It leaves unresolved some important problems:

The Boni have the idea that their kin groups are lineages in the real sense of the term. Nevertheless, questioning on genealogies does not permit all to /21/ go back to the founding ancestress. Three of them, the most important numerically, prove in this respect to be divided into several fractions. Can we be sure that these fractions are actually of the same origin and that the people concerned are not deceiving themselves in believing it? In the social structure of the Refugee Blacks are there no mechanisms leading toward assimilation, to fusion of groups of heterogeneous origin?

We cannot answer these questions directly. First of all it is indispensable to study the conception that the Boni have of kinship ties within the matrilineage. Then we shall examine the genealogical tables of the various lineages, and for those that the study of genealogies shows to be divided into several fractions, we shall study the interrelations of these fractions.

601 613 Kinship within the matrilineage: The kinship terms translate a purely classificatory system. The principle of classificatory kinship

/21 cont./

602 613 614 191

1. This conception of kinship is also found among the Agni of the Ivory Coast and the Fon of Dahomey; it may be widespread in Black Africa, especially in populations with matrilineal filiation.

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/22/ This conception, associated with that of the kunu, conflicts with the fractioning of lineages on the religious plane, even when a scission has taken place on the plane of residence. The rigor of the principle laid down, the quasi-mathematical transmission from one generation to the next of appellations based on rank relative to the foundress, prohibits the thought that elements foreign to the lineage can be integrated into this system by any process whatever. Nevertheless, a doubt remains as to the possibility of assimilating fragments with paternal kinship, for in paternal kinship the same principle of classificatory kinship rules, and the same appellations are used. We shall show that such a process of assimilation actually exists on the social plane, but that it is inconceivable on the religious plane, the kunu always being transmitted by the mother. /Fig. 3 appears here./

602 613 614

Knowledge of genealogical ties is very variable from one lineage to another. Outside of the great splits like Dipélu I-Dipélu II, we have demonstrated that small fractions of several lineages could no longer be attached to the main trunk, the genealogical ties being irremediably lost. The people concerned had never realized this; they had never wondered about it. This was the case particularly:

—With Samma's descendants (Dipélu II, Asini);

—With the group of Atili's descendants (Lapé, Bonneville).

[178]

In both cases the split was very recent; old men dead for only a few years knew the genealogical ties now lost.

/22 cont./

613 Situation of the lineages in 1958.

[643] The Dikan lineage, whose head is the grand man of the Boni, has practically died out, since it is comprised of only Grand Man Difu: upon his death it will totally disappear (1).

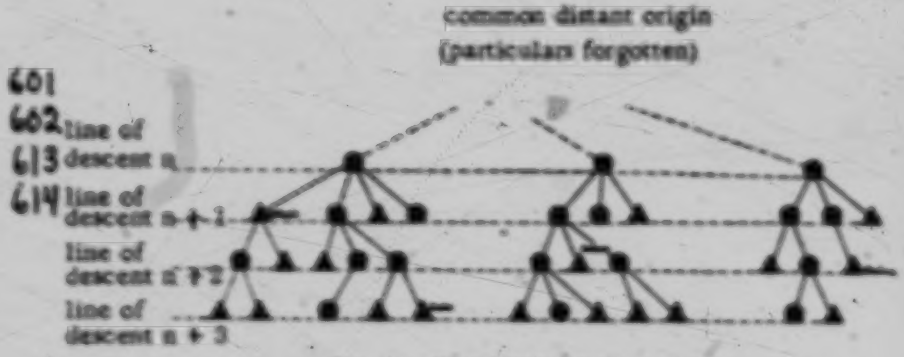

Fig. 3. Extended matrilineage.

613 184 174 1. Note that a Dikan lo exists among the Djuka: the separation of the Dikan-Djuka and the Dikan-Boni is necessarily anterior to the battles of 1793, which shows the ancientness of these groups.

621 613 571 For two generations the various lineages have delegated some of their members /23/ to the grand man to conserve a certain importance for his village. Thus Agodé (Boniville) now includes fragments of the Kotika, Dipélu, Lapé, Dju, and Papaïton lineages, forming that many individualized small quarters in the village.

613 /28 cont./
[601] nothing of their strength although they have lost all correspondence with the age of the people concerned.

614 —Dipélu II, whose members know their genealogy badly,
671 appears on the contrary to be on the way toward breaking up. The head of the Dipélu II, who bears the title of captain, resides
[578] at Kormotibo. Part of the group settled in Asisi following a disagreement, without ceasing to be under his authority.

614 One might think that the physical separation of the two
602 groups took place as a function of the genealogies, that the 2nd
571 fraction of Dipélu II emigrated as a single group to Asisi, leaving in Kormotibo the members of the 1st fraction. But this is not the case at all; examination of the genealogical table shows that the emigrant group issues as much from one as from the other; this is a very remarkable aspect of the social structure of the Refugee Blacks, which proceeds directly from their conceptions of classificatory kinship. A man is "at home" wherever his classificatory "brothers" and "uncles" live, and if a physical separation occurs in the group, preferences and personal affinities will have as much influence as closeness of kinship. /28/

613 Three generations ago, Dipélu was only one group under
614 the leadership of a single head residing in Kormotibo. The process
591 of its breaking up is a beautiful example of what Europeans produce
199 by interfering in the social life of an African tribe in order to pick out a man who appears to them more intelligent and active than the others.

[554] The companion of the explorer Crevaux, Apatu, who be-
[621] longed to this group, was on his return covered with honors, en-
[578] dowed with the title of captain and with pay; he conflicted with the legitimate head of the tp, seceded, and founded a village on the outskirts of Saint-Laurent, taking with him a fraction of the group.

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/26 cont./

This village had no future. its complement did nothing but melt away for half a century, especially under the influence of venereal diseases.

Neither time nor geographical separation have brought on scission on the religious or legal planes. In this respect the members of Dipélu I and Dipélu II continue to think of one another as [184] the same lineage. They remain subject to the same kunu.

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The law of exogamy continues to be applied rigorously within Dipélu I and within Dipélu II, but marriages are permitted between Dipélu I and II. There are no longer any social sanctions about this, and the common origin of the two groups is so remote that they scarcely think any more of applying to them the term [184] pikadu. But such unions remain exceptional, the people concerned continuing to fear a superhuman sanction.

[621] No element of heterogeneous origin, fragment paternally related or refugee outsiders, has settled among the Dipélu.

613
[621]

The Papalisoo or Kawina lineage (Papalisoo village) has remained perfectly coherent and well grouped. Its members know their genealogy as far back as an ancestress named Téréza, who must have lived at the beginning of the 18th century. But there exists a small fraction, nearly extinct, which we shall designate as Papalisoo 2, which presents a separate genealogy going almost [614] as far back in time. Nobody knows the origin of this group exactly; it is regarded as connected by kinship ties to the main group, but [184] the members of the two groups consider that they form two distinct [582] They do not have the same kunu.

Marriage is not tolerated within the principal group, but it is allowed between members of the two groups.

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Moreover, with the Papalisoo lives a small group which fled from Surinam about the end of the 19th century, originally of the Bakabuchi tribe. This group has no kinship tie at all with the Papalisoo but has placed itself under the authority of the head

/26 cont./

613 621 of the Papaïsson lo. It is generally designated by "Toïna's family." Toïna being the doyenne of the group.

613 614 [621] The Awara Bakka lineage (Asisi village) has a more complex and particularly interesting structure. Study of its genealogy shows that it is in fact divided into three fractions which we shall call Aw.B.1, Aw.B.2, Aw.B.1 /misprint for Aw.B.3 -- Tr./. The Aw.B.1 know /27/ their genealogy perfectly back to an ancestress named Akyé, great-great-grandmother of the centenarian Kuluba (†1957). Akyé must have lived toward the end of the 18th century.

613 614 571 [621] Awara Bakka 3 is a paternally related fragment which was "assimilated" to the principal group by a process of which several other examples exist among the Boni. It was founded by Anéta, a Djuka woman originally from the village of Tabiki on the Tapanaoni, wife of Fèèyon (Aw.B.1), who remained there with her numerous descendants after the death of her husband.

The members of this group, who should normally be regarded as Djuka and outsiders to the lo, end up by being engulfed in the social organization and ancestor worship of the Awara Bakka. The [601] daughters of Anéta and Fèèyon were called "sisters" by the Aw.B.1 by reason of patrilineal relationship. These appellations were [1964] transposed for their descendants to the point where many ended by losing their true origin from sight, but the Aw.B.3 keep a separate religious and legal responsibility and are subject to their own kumu, that of the Djuka village of Tabiki from which came their ancestress.

613 614 571 As a matter of fact, as we shall show by studying the beliefs of the Boni, the kumu is irremediably transmitted by the mother and no process of assimilation has any effect on this. Thus the Aw.B.3 are not really part of the lineage; they are separated from it by a clear criterion, obvious in the eyes of all, impossible to disregard or forget.

/27 cont./

614 The Aw.B.2, on whom we could not get sure information
[123] because this very closed group did not cooperate willingly with the inquiry, appear to be in a very similar situation, with the difference that their genealogy goes back much farther in time and they no longer remember the origin of this fraction nor the
[984] circumstances which tied its fate to that of the Aw.B.1. This group apparently has a separate kunu.

613 The Awara Bakka lineage is in a special situation from the
614 point of view of exogamy, for not only are there marriages be-
512 tween one fraction and another, but there are two within the same
[183] fraction and between relatively near relatives. Thus this group, without openly rejecting the law of exogamy, does not attach the same importance to it as do the others.

613 The Afi lineage. This lineage was founded by Afi, wife of
[101] a man from Papaïchton, who came to live with him. Like the Toina lineage, she had come from the small tribe called Bakabuchi which lived in Surinam. However, the Afi and Toina lineages are not of the same matrilineal origin and the present members of each of the two small groups have no common worship. All of
[571] them have lost every tie with their original tribe, and their social life is entirely dependent on that of the Boni group which has taken them in.

[621] Afi settled near Kormotibo. This site is abandoned by her descendants who live, most of them, in Assi, the rest in Kormotibo.

The lineage has lost every tie with its group of origin.
[619] Nevertheless, it is assumed that if one of them wanted to go back there, on proving his relationship, he would take up all his rights again and could demand a site for making his clearings.

613 /28/ The process of assimilation which took place for the
621 AW.B.3 did not come into play for Afi's descendants with respect
571 to the Papaïchton lineage. They are regarded as a separate family group, insufficient in number to constitute a social unit and whose members are placed under the authority of the heads of the villages

/28 cont./

613 where they have chosen to live. It is possible that later, if their
621 number continues to increase, they may found a separate village
• 571 whose head will be recognized as captain. A new lo would thus be created.

613 Real nature of Boni matrilineal groups. Examination of the situation
614 of the various lineages leads to the following conclusions:
571 — The fact that genealogies are forgotten does not lead to any fractioning of lineages on the material or religious planes.

— The conceptions of the Boni relative to classificatory kinship, as well as their custom hostile toward any discrimination within the lineage, hinder fractioning. When a separation takes place on the plane of residence and authority, it has no repercussion on the common worship which cements the lineage together;

— The fashion in which the law of exogamy is applied does not constitute a valid criterion, the attitude of the various groups in this regard being quite variable;

— No process of assimilation permits integration into the lineage of elements of foreign origin; a process of assimilation of paternally related fragments exists. But this assimilation is not complete, it does not operate on the plane of legal and religious responsibility;

613 — Ultimately, the surest criterion of true common matrilineal
614 origin is unity of legal and religious responsibility, marked by the
784 same kunu. The kunu, transmitted irrevocably by the mother whatever may be the conditions of her marriage, weighing collectively on all the members of a lineage and capable of being warded off only by their collective prayers, is the true cement of kin groups.

[571] By its very nature, the kunu opposes any scission of groups. Neither time nor geographical separation can break it.

[621] The example of Dipélu I and II is characteristic in this regard, for its members remain rigorously subject to the same kunu

/28 cont./

613 614 784 [621] although the supposed common ancestress doubtless goes back to the beginning of the 18th century and for three generations they have been divided among four villages situated at a week's distance by boat from one another. We can, with very few chances of error, affirm that they certainly have a common matrilineal origin and that they in fact constitute one lineage.

182 419 [Bo] [1079] On this subject let us note that geographical separation cannot play the same role among the Refugee Blacks as in the African tribes of cultivators. The Refugee Blacks, whose habitat is linear along the banks of the river and who, being boatmen, are continually moving, cannot be completely isolated from one another.

613 614 591 /29/ Under these conditions, how can we explain the existence within certain lineages of individualized fractions subject to a separate kunu, such as Papaliton 2?

One can assume that these fractions do not really have the same origin as the principal group and that they result from a process of assimilation of a paternally related fragment.

We have cited the example of Anata's descendants (Aw.B.3). They are already integrated into the social life of the group; in two or three generations nobody will remember any longer their exact origin. But they will remain differentiated from the principal fraction of the Awara Bakka because they will still be subject to the kunu of their ancestress. [784]

121 Such are the elements we have been able to draw from a general study of kin groups among the Boni. We shall look for other data in the study of the implantation of these groups on the soil, and especially of the apportionment of lands among them; finally, we shall study family custom and especially inheritance.

A complete understanding of the kinship system and its functioning can be obtained only in the future by following the evolution of kin groups, the formation of new villages and the designation of new headmen.

/29 cont./

121 This is what necessitates as precise an inventory as possible of the population in its present state.

61 Matrilineal kin groups among the Djuka and Saramaka Refugee Blacks.
114 Authors who have described the social structure of the Djuka and
184 Saramaka, groupings appreciably more numerous than the Boni, have also called attention to the use of the words lo and bee, but give them a completely different meaning.

194 The organization they describe can be summarized thus:
591 Before making up tribes, the rebels lived in small groups
621 near the plantations from which they had escaped; these groups of composite origin were designated by the word lo which means: troop, band; the same word is used to designate a band of animals.

[162] These rebels used to belong to all the nations of the west
[103] coast of Africa. In spots there may have been an attempt at regroupings of elements belonging to the same nation, as proven by the village names Loango, Dahomey, among the Saramaka.
[622] But the majority of these small groups were very probably of heterogeneous origin; in each of these lo, the bravest and most capable was designated as head.

[648] After the recognition of the Djuka and Saramaka by the
[167] government of Surinam and their regrouping on the great rivers of the interior, these groups kept their unity since they had a de facto organization and leaders. They were naturally designated by the name of the plantation they had come from. We say for example Dju nêngé for the former slaves of the Jews, Kêpani nêngé for the former slaves of the Compagnie des Indes Orientales /East India Company/. /30/

174 In the course of the 19th century the total number of Refugee
613 Blacks increased very rapidly under the influence of a high birth
614 rate. The lineages in the proper meaning of the term beg, meaning the descendants of the same ancestors, took on sufficient importance to constitute distinct social units. They grouped in
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174 613 614 621 separate villages and the more important even burst out into several villages whose heads were recognized as "captains" by the grand man and then by the government. The number of Djuka captains recognized by the government of Surinam has not stopped growing; it was 28 these last few years.

• 571 The lo no longer represented an effective social unit, but its members kept common worships. For example, it is said that [188] the Dju nēnge go each year as a ritual to get earth from the Savane des Juifs /Savanna of the Jews/ where their ancestors were slaves.

[114] This explanation seems probable. The kin-group is not the only social unit known to Africans; the bond between man and land has equal importance in their eyes; the fact that their fathers had lived together, that they had been buried in the same cemetery created a among the rebel slaves a de facto bond which was able to suffice, at the beginning of the rebellion, to found villages and a social organization.

[114] However, this theory cannot be entertained without reservations. It has not been possible to verify it by systematic studies, the Djuka and Saramaka having firmly opposed until now any ethnographic investigation involving the statement of genealogies and the inventory of the population of the villages.

[184] It contradicts what we have pointed out among the Boni. In that group six great lineages are counted, of which four (Dju, Kotika, La Paix, Dikan) have a name also alluding to the plantations from which their ancestors fled.

Nevertheless it is certainly a question of lineages in the proper meaning of the term, and nobody remembers that any other organization ever existed. Also, in the absence of systematic studies of the Djuka and Saramaka, the problem of the origin of [184] their kin groups remains obscure. The future will permit verifying one or the other of the two hypotheses.

174 /30 cont./
613 1st. Lo s de facto grouping of rebels of any provenance,
614 which has in the long run split up into lineages but which remains
621 in the form of a common worship;
571 2nd. Lo s lineage, from the very beginning.
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Conceptions Relative to Kinship and Marriage

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[21] Ties between the individual and the ancestors. Before examining
more deeply the social and family structure of the Refugee Blacks,
[184] it is indispensable to study what religious ties are implied between
the individual and the ancestors. Here one is in the presence of
basic beliefs which seem identical in the various tribes of Refugee
Blacks of Guiana and of which their structure is the consequence.

In the civilizations of Blacks Africa it is supposed that a
[171] current of life and /31/ strength circulates from the divinity to
men through the medium of the ancestors. Among the Refugee
Blacks it is taken for granted that in this respect each man is bound
[182] to his ancestors through the maternal line only. If he falls prey
to illness, injustice, or adversity, he can call only on them in
his prayer.

573 That does not mean that the tie with the father is ignored
[227] or considered as having little importance; it is taken for granted,
as we shall see, that in the creation of man certain psychic ele-
ments are transmitted from father to son. But the current of strength
binding the individual to the ancestors does not pass through the
father. One cannot pray usefully to the soul of one's dead father.
[155] If I am sick and divination incriminates the action of my dead
[172] father's soul, I cannot address either prayer or offering directly to
him; for that I shall have recourse to one of his uncles in
the maternal line.

/32 cont./

601 The very rigor of this principle seems to have to lead to a
613 scission of the lineages, for one can hardly conceive that people
• 571 will be willing to address girls younger than themselves as "my
[163] grandmother" and show them respect: now that must necessarily be the case at the end of a certain number of generations, for as we shall see, the fecundity of Boni women sometimes lasts up to the age of 50, and there are cases where the interval between the oldest and youngest child reaches 35 years.

Nevertheless, we have not actually observed that this conception of kinship leads to scissions or even to serious clashes.

That derives from the very nature of the hierarchy and the social ties within the matrilineage: they entail a collective tutelage by one generation over the next, and in the same way a collective tutelage by the ancestors over the living. But for the same reason that every prayer, every invocation addressed individually to such-and-such an ancestor is avoided, the hierarchy of the Refugee Blacks does not give rise to relationships of authority between one man and another, which would not be tolerated. Only the bedemE, or captain, designated by the assembly of the lineage, exerts a personal authority: even so, he is careful to limit it almost exclusively to religious functions.

604 "Uncles" exert collectively an authority over the generation
613 of "nephews." They meet in council, especially on the question of marriages. They do not vote, strictly speaking, but the opposition of three or four of them prevents the carrying out of a project. There is no preponderant voice for the closest uncles (yet in practice this seems to be taken into account). But the eldest of the uncles in the classificatory sense is unanimously recognized as preponderant.

602 Existence of patrilineages. Matrilineages are not the only kin
784 groups of the Refugee Blacks. Each one receives from his father
428 a fundamental interdiction -- bogai kina -- which he will have

/35 cont./

593 This organization, compared with what is found in the
greater part of Africa, is very advantageous for the wife, who
[581] enjoys total independence. But against this she has great instability
of unions.

581 The union of man and woman has so little of the character
601 of a marriage that in the Boni language no word exists which
means, strictly speaking, "husband" or "wife." They say: mi
tibi anga X = "I live with So-and-so.

174 How has the social and matrimonial system of the Refugee
•591 Blacks been set up? One could believe that one of the systems
of Western Africa was purely and simply transposed, but this is
not the case at all. In this domain as in that of beliefs, the an-
cestors of the Refugee Blacks elaborated an original synthesis out
of numerous sources.

The African nations from which the rebels issued were cer-
tainly, in large part if not in the majority, patrilineal. This is
especially the case of the Fon of Dahomey, from whom have been
borrowed important cultural elements, especially the principal
cults of possession. The matrilineal ones all conceded patrilocal
residence, that is, the wife's leaving her village and settling in
her husband's village.

[195] The 18th-century rebels, the archives attest, included a
heavy percentage of "salt-water Negroes," born on African soil;
such, for example, was Codio Coromantin, one of Boni's lieuten-
ants; those who had not been born in Africa had, for the most part,
been instructed in an African tradition by a father or uncle. One
can be sure that once having attained freedom they sought to or-
ganize their villages according to the family custom by which
they had been brought up, that is, to set up, some a patrilineal
and patrilocal society, others a matrilineal society /36/ but with
[643] patrilocal residence. We know for example that Boni had chosen
his son Agoss as his successor.

Columbia--S3 K-5 (1948-1958) 1961 SRS Bush Negroes SRS Boni

/36 cont./

194 591

Family custom is a thing tenacious in other ways than a language, a technique, indeed a cult. Men cling desperately to the social and matrimonial system they have received, with the feeling that if they abandoned it their familiar universe would crumble. Do we not see nowadays in the big African cities groups completely separated geographically from their tribe of origin, subject sometimes for several generations to European influence, maintain fiercely their matrimonial system? Yet in all the tribes of Refugee Blacks patrilineal filiation prevailed nowhere at all, and patrilocal residence disappeared, it seems, rather rapidly; the problem cannot be dodged by facile explanations such as the influence of slavery or the rarity of women among the rebels (1).

[583]

1. The rebel groups were quickly balanced from a demographic point of view, for they went and carried off women from the plantations.

One must assume that fundamental reasons made the patrilineal groups less viable than the others and finally led to their dissolution. These reasons appear to be of two orders:

—The independent spirit of the African woman, concerned above all with her freedom with respect to the man;

—The moral and religious law under which the unification of the tribes of Refugee Blacks was brought about, implying rejection of any form of violence or oppression. Under this law it could no longer be a question of taking the wife away from her maternal village if she was attached to it, no more than of coercing her to make her live in a union which had ceased to please her.

/36 cont./

174 671 The formation of patrilineages must have been hampered by numerous divorces; in addition, in case of divorce, the wife unquestionably aspired to take her children with her, not recognizing any contract between the two groups of kin which might be able to affect her free will; one can also be certain that the children, if consulted, must have followed their mother in most cases and (586) joined their maternal kin group. This tendency remains perfectly observable in our days; we shall see all its importance when we study how the children are raised and what tutelage is exercised upon them.

Now there is no patrilineage conceivable if, in case of divorce, the children do not stay with the father. Patrilineal societies exist in which the wife is free, were it only the Peule society, where divorces are very frequent. But African custom has it that in a patrilineal system, by reason of payment of the dowry, the wife's kin lose all rights over the children. They have entered the man's kin group and his ancestral cult.

The formation of matrilineal and patrilocal groupings must also have collided with analogous difficulties, the women not willingly leaving their village of origin.

One can rather easily imagine that in the initial period of the formation of the /??/ new tribes, the different matrimonial systems coexisted; then the patrilocal groups, less viable, progressively broke up, while the present custom was being established.

175 683 This point of view is confirmed by an exact piece of information collected at the end of the 19th century by the explorer Caudreau. Upon the death of Agom, son of Boni, it was his son Gongo who succeeded him. But after the death of Gongo, the succession went according to the matrilineal system.

583 (591) Another important aspect of the matrimonial system of the Refugee Blacks is the absence of any compensation or payment. Even if it happens that a woman leaves her lineage permanently in order to settle in her husband's village and found a family there

/37 cont./

An example of scission in a kin group: the separation of Dipelu II between Kormotibo and Asisi. (See Dep. II genealogical Table.)

This scission resulted from a ridiculous incident: a falling-out which occurred between ○ Alawenchi † (E19) and ○ Bongo (E8) because of a hoe which the first claimed to have been stolen from her by Bongo.

Since neither one would yield, they became really angry and fought. /38/

△ Agosa, head of the lineage, taking the part of Alawenchi, decided to secede and settle in Asisi.

○ Pilli † (F35) and ○ Sêwey † (F38) who, their mother being dead, had been raised by Alawenchi, joined them and founded families in Asisi.

This explains the present scission of this group and the bizarre division of its members between Kormotibo and Asisi. This scission had no result on the religious plane, unity being maintained by the patient tie of the kumu. Nowadays, Captain Pompe's authority is exerted normally on the fraction in Asisi. Relations between the two groups are rather good. /Figs. 5 and 6 appear here./

/40/ CHAPTER III

INVENTORY OF THE PEOPLING OF THE BONI VILLAGES

We have tried to take a complete census of the Boni of the Upper Maroni as of January 1, 1956, including for the women the statement of their successive unions and of their children living and dead. This census is associated with detailed plans of the villages and a study of the territorial implantation of kin groups.

/87/

Structure and Composition of the Villages

The examination we have just made of the peopling of six villages shows important aspects of the social organization and marital life of the Boni.

Kin groups in the villages. We have seen that the principle of Boni residence was localization of the whole lineage, men, women, and children, which implies the absence of common household life, man and wife each living in his own village.

This principle of matrilocal residence is effectively applied in nearly all cases. In 1957, out of all the 670 persons in the villages on the Pranch bank, only 27 adults out of 410, or six per cent, were living in the midst of their paternal relatives or had settled permanently in the village of their spouse.

Nowhere is seen any tendency toward patrilocal grouping: the small lineages issued in the course of the past two generations from Djuka or Saketuchi wives who came to settle permanently near their husbands do not escape the common law. Their members follow strictly, with respect to their ancestors, the principle of matrilocal residence.

Another important conclusion is revealed by examination of the genealogical tables:

When a scission takes place within a lineage, scattering its members among several villages under different authorities, this scission is never complete. Lineage members feel at home as much in one as in the other of these villages and go at will from one to the other.

The Dipelo I example is particularly clear in this respect. Its members are divided among three villages: L'Enfant Perdu, Apatu, and Benville (where this lineage occupies a quarter).

/58 cont./

It is fitting to make an exception of the case of Owémi (Papaïchton) and Oma Imma (Kotika), who separated from their groups with their numerous descendants in order to found villages on the lower course of the river. These groups continue to consider themselves Boni; they are the nuclei of future villages.

For the same reason it is difficult to get exact figures on immigration. About 100 Djuka and Saramaka have founded farming villages in Boni country but keep all their ties with their villages of origin; some 30 of them have married Boni women; one can estimate that some 15 have completely bound up their fate with the Boni and can be considered as integrated into the villages in which they have settled.

All in all one can estimate that emigration and immigration of adult men, both very insignificant, compensate for each other; they have practically no importance on the social plane (since only the residence of the women has any influence upon the grouping of the lineages) or on the demographic plane; with the Boni the pyramid of ages constructed from the census of the villages represents very faithfully the demographic state of the population and lends itself to precise calculations of mortality (1).

1. It is not the same for the majority of African populations either because of emigration to the cities or polygamy. The presence of several average polygamists in a village is enough to render completely erroneous the counts of cross-sections by age.

The founding of new lineages results from the immigration of several Djuka women, some having come to settle permanently near their husbands, others brought up by their fathers in a Boni village. Half a dozen such cases occur in each generation, but

/58 cont./
not all result in the founding of a new lineage, either because the women are sterile or because only one or two surviving children remain who go back to live among their maternal kin. The more children a woman has, the more she tends to settle permanently with her descendants, for the group thus formed represents a force and can be self-sufficient as much on the material level as on the emotional level.

Four new lineages have been founded in the whole of Boni country during the past 50 years: /59/

Awara Bakka 3 (Ashita)	16 persons	on January 1, 1958
Afi	25	--
Tolina	9	--
Puci	8	--
Total....	58 persons	

Thus these new lineages represent only $\frac{58}{818}$ = 7 per cent of the Boni.

The immigration of women from other tribes thus remains an exceptional phenomenon which has few effects on the social and demographic levels. The development of the Boni as a nation results only from the natural movement of the population. Study of the genealogies forces the conclusion that when the members of these four small lineages are eliminated, the whole of the Boni are descended from only six or seven women who lived at the end of the 18th century. Few examples of such growth are to be found.

Absence of division of the villages into quarters. We have seen that the custom of the Refugee Blacks is opposed to all that could alter the system of classificatory kinship and leads to the individualization of segments within the lineage. This principle is translated very clearly in the structure of the villages, where one observes no tendency at all toward division into separate quarters.

/61/

1937	Mission to determine the trijunction point of the frontiers of French Guiana-Brazil-Surinam.
1939	Declaration of war.
1944-45	Not a precise point of reference. The Boni confuse the liberation of the territory with the end of the war.
1948	First I.G.N. mission.
1949	Mr. Aubert de la Rüe's mission; second I.G.N. mission.
1952	Third I.G.N. mission. /blank page/ /63/

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

The social institutions of the Refugee Blacks diverge noticeably from those of the African peoples from whom they issued. They do not include age grades, men's societies, or initiation; marriage involves neither a contract between kin groups nor "dowry."

In a general way these societies founded by rebel slaves who had retained an extreme horror of all oppression were organized so as not to have any material constraint weigh upon the individual. Their institutions are entirely founded on the idea of protection against suprahuman perils; the individual remains perfectly free, and he adheres /to these institutions/ only in proportion as he is conscious of these perils. The custom of the Refugee Blacks, devoid of any means of material coercion, tends to develop within the individual the feeling that he is constantly threatened.

/63 cont./
571 that he can protect himself only by submitting to the law of the
622 group. In this doubtless must be seen the deep reason for the im-
156 portance attached to death and mourning, events around which is
[821] centered the activity of the usual societies and which entail a
[761] veritable mobilization.

626 It would be very difficult to condense the custom of the
991 Refugee Blacks into a rigorous code. If one wished to do it, one would have to write as Article 1: "The living will conform to the will of the gods and the ancestors as it is expressed through the mouths of those possessed and by the movements of the bearers of the dead."

613 Each one of the tribes of the Refugee Blacks is formed of a
619 certain number of matrilineages.

There is no limit on the number of these lineages, and it can be asserted that if any lineage whatever, detached from another tribe, asks to live in the midst of the Boni, it will be welcomed. From the first generation the children consider themselves as Boni.

In this regard one can cite the example of the Awara Bakka 3 lineage and that of the small lineage founded in Boniville by a Djuka woman, wife of Grand Man Ochi. All her descendants consider themselves Boni. /64/

[829] But only the great lineages which constituted the tribe at its
[643] origin are social units recognized by the grand man, and only their heads are called to be members of the council.

128 We shall study first the interior functioning of the lineage, then the institutions going beyond the framework of the lineages.

6:Hurault--88 K-S (1948-1958) 1961 SR8 Bush Negroes SR8 Boub

/64 cont./

613 561 Nevertheless the lineage is not strictly speaking divided into age grades; and when the men assemble in council for an affair which concerns the whole group, all may take the floor without consideration either of age or of place in the genealogy.

613 571 54 The council (kuutu). This is the principal social institution within the lo. The kuutu is the assembly of the men of the lo without consideration of age. No precise rule defines the age at which an adolescent may begin to attend it, and in principle all may take the floor. But decorum requires that unless they are personally interested in the question or have something important to say, the young let the elders do the talking. /65/

613 571 It is the captain (hedemi) and in his absence the eldest of the lineage who presides. He faces the assemblage, surrounded by some of the oldest men.

[539] Opposite him he has a respondent (piki mi) who greets all his sentences with ritual approbations hiya, hiya ba!, na so!, etc., without which a Refugee Black could not suitably make his speech.

[562] Each one then speaks if he feels the need to express his opinion. Women do not take part in the council unless it is a question of a daughter's marriage; but it happens that men leave the meeting to go get the advice of their mothers and take their places again. If it concerns a simple affair without suprahuman complications, such as the fixing of the price of a piece of work, the discussion is often quickly over; but in the opposite case the discussion continues interminably, for there is no exact rule for concluding it. Only a negative rule exists: the determined opposition of one-fourth to one-fifth of the council members prevents the carrying out of a project.

/85 cont./

613 571 It seems that they expect unanimity to occur and that basically (here are found again the mental mechanisms peculiar to the Refugee Blacks), they expect it to take place by itself, to impose itself as if obvious. If nothing of the sort happens, they separate without deciding anything.

613 571 828 This public discussion of all important questions results, in the thought of the Refugee Blacks, not so much from a belief in the wisdom of assemblies as from fear of malevolence. If questions were debated in a small group, there would immediately be mistrustful and jealous minds who would see dark intrigues in it. The constant concern of the Refugee Blacks, when they have something important to say, is to find witnesses. That is in fact the role of the council, and it is why there is neither a lower age limit for taking part nor a precise rule governing the fashion of conducting the discussion.

613 554 The Captain or bedemã. The head of each of the great lineages which have been part of the tribe since its origin is recognized by the grand man as bedemã or "captain" (this word had been used since the original settlement of Europeans in Guiana to designate the chiefs of Indian tribes).

[592] The captains preside over the ãnti kuutu, supreme council whose functions are principally judiciary.

No precise rule of succession exists, and the choice of the members of the lineage is entirely free with regard to kinship ties.

[593] When the old people are questioned about this, they usually answer that the successor must be chosen from among the classificatory "nephews" of the dead man, that is, from among the members of the lineage who are one more generation away from the foundress.

/NT cont./

613 SSY 692 [642] 2) He exerts an extended judiciary power, for it is taken for granted that the legal and political power of the tribe cannot intervene in affairs between members of the same lineage, even murder, for it can be said that in the custom of the Refugee Blacks the lineage represents only one single life.

It is obligatory that the following be settled within the framework of the lineage:

[564] --Accusations of murder by sorcery where victim and supposed murderer are both members of the lineage;

[423] [578] --Arguments over lands within the zones effectively possessed by the lineage.

613 SSY 692 577 The way in which the captain exercises his functions as judge is hard to know, because for the Refugee Blacks it is extremely shameful to reveal the dimensions within one's own lineage. And as for those of other lineages, if one succeeds in becoming acquainted with them, one scarcely dares talk about it for if that came to be known you could smart for it.

613 442 554 Lineage heads have a certain authority on the material level; they designate the men charged with doing the work ordered by the administration, but truth to tell, it is above all a question of choosing from among volunteers, for it is profitable work. They might not succeed in imposing clearly unpopular orders.

613 SSY 629 The captain designates a certain number of supervisors or basia to help him. Their /68/ role consists in watching over the cleanliness of the village, in making all the material arrangements relative to dances and burials, in calling together those concerned to the meetings of the council.

613 591 The lo constitutes a unit from the spiritual point of view, but it is important to notice that it does not involve any collective organization on the material level. In this domain the wildest individualism reigns; there are no tools for collective use, and people get together to make their clearings only if they want to.

/48 cont./

561 198 The class of the young people, yuŋku sama, has definite activities; "style," that is to say, elegance, dancing, singing; it has a special language made up from taki-taki by inversion or addition of syllables. When the language begins to be known outside the group of young people, it is abandoned and another is invented. These past years the language in vogue was akɔsina, of Djuka origin; it had given rise to a whole folklore of songs.

561 Two other age classes appear to be rather clearly differentiated: that of the elders /60/ - gaĩ sama - (older than some 50 years), whose voices are preponderant in the councils, and that of the old men - gaĩndi sama - (older than 65 to 70 years).

[588] It is conceded by all that only the elders possess wisdom and knowledge, and in principle, in a discussion, the opinion of the eldest of them has the force of law.

575 Neither does one perceive among the Refugee Blacks any customary societies playing a role comparable to the men's society

• 571 in the Sudan for example. In a general way their social life, very individualistic in spite of appearances, knows no other organization than the one resulting from kinship ties.

769 Nevertheless, the organization of the men within each village with an eye to the mourning ceremonies can be regarded as a rough approximation to customary societies:

--Kisimã or coffin-makers;

--Oloma or grave-diggers.

But these societies are narrowly specialized and their customary powers exist only as long as the duration of their effective work.

562 571 Men and women. Even within the lineage where men and women call one another brother, sister, aunt ... the relations between men and women are marked by mistrust.

6:Thurau--26 K-5 (1948-1958) 1961 SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Boni

/69 cont./

562 823 [191] It is assumed once and for all that women are shrews on whom one cannot count and from whom one can get nothing. The Refugee Blacks are inexhaustible on this subject and their opinion about the women of their group is very similar to that of Africans in general: they call them ill-natured, devoid of feeling, selfish, greedy, and unfaithful.

562 571 [165] In general, women are held apart from regular social life; no form of customary society of women exists. In the mourning ceremonies, which correspond to a veritable mobilization of the village, they play no role, except to prepare the meals.

562 789 794 Yet the women play indirectly an important role in the social life by way of the cults of possession. The *Papa gadu* gods so formidable have women nearly exclusively as bearers, and we shall see in studying the functioning of the *kumu* that they are the principal actors in this. Though this activity, which is exerted in arbitrary fashion on the outskirts of the institutions of regular social life, the women maintain around themselves an atmosphere of fear; it is not impossible that the functioning of these cults is influenced by the concern of the women to maintain their privileged position in the society of the Refugee Blacks.

562 159 Many women are charitable and have a certain generosity toward the members of their family, insuring the maintenance of the old men without resources. But their benevolence is essentially subjective and extends only to a small circle of personal friends and their nearest relatives. As soon as the elders appeal to them for a question of general interest, claiming to give them orders or even advice, they meet an attitude systematically malevolent and stubborn. /70/

[613] The lineage heads avoid giving them orders directly, for they run a strong risk of getting themselves insulted, as we have observed many a time.

/15 cont./

591 991 692 In fact, the society of the Refugee Blacks has not elaborated true political institutions; it is essentially a grouping for collective defense against superhuman perils. The council, like the grand man, has power and authority only insofar as it remains closely bound to this function.

511 [545] Absence of subordination. Among the Refugee Blacks no privileged class exists. /16/ and they all face life on a footing of rigorous equality; all receive the same education, must cultivate the soil, [554] build their boats and houses, and live by paid work. The differences in standard of living observed from one to another stem basically from intelligence and work; and that, in spite of the belief in the possibility of getting rich by sorcery, is clearly understood by all.

565 [445] Although the Boni willingly engage in paid work for one another in transportation by boat, there exists no tendency toward the formation of a class of rich people and one of wage-earners. 571 461 [559] 462 No servants exist among them, and one observes in their mutual relations no exploitation of the weak. Neither does one observe that a rich man tries to have done by another, for pay, the customary jobs he must carry out for the benefit of his wife (clearing, building of boats). This would be looked on with great disfavor. The grand [643] man himself, if his grandson is not there to help him, goes himself to draw water from the river and he does it ostensibly, even though he has a constant concern for his prestige.

829 The misfortunes undergone by their ancestors are certainly at the base of this conception; for they have inspired in the Refugee Blacks a particular sense of human dignity which is not found to the same degree in Africa.

Gilhausen--107 K-5 (1948-1958) 1961 SRS Bush Negroes SRS Boni

433 439 322 [556] [444] [199]

/16 cont./

No form of trade (1) is traditionally observed among them.

1. Since 1956, one of them, enriched by boat transport, set up a food business at Konika, but this is a man more than half "creolized" and one who established himself in the midst of Creoles.

this activity being for them manifestly tied to the idea of the exploitation of others; there is not even any market in the villages. Each person produces, or finds among the people of his own lineage, what food he needs; as for imported objects, the Boni buy them in the course of their trips from the coast traders. That plague of African societies, pseudo-trade or parasitism, is unknown to the Refugee Blacks. Just as one meets among them neither ragamuffins nor beggars, one perceives nothing nasty or low in their social relations.

433 439 591 [935]

In their collective life there is something shovehound, clean, which strikes one on first meeting them and which one does not cease of admiring, the further one penetrates into the functioning of their institutions.

/190/

241 423 425 613 Real right. The principle is that he who makes a clearing out of primary forest (or old secondary forest without a known owner) creates at the same time as a right of use for himself, an imprescriptible right for his lineage.

These two notions are very separate in the minds of the Refugee Blacks. The exercise of a right of use, even over a long period of time, over land already recognized as the possession of another lineage does not create any real right at all.

For example, ○ Béniti † 1953 (E5), an old woman of the Dju lo, had founded a farming habitation in the Kuyaku locality, where she worked the earth for several tens of years. But since these lands, even though unoccupied, were regarded as belonging to the Dipélu II lo (Kormotibo village), Béniti's work did not create any right at all for the Dju lo. If her daughters do not agree and if the habitation disappears, it is people of the Dipélu II lo who will be able to occupy the lands.

613 571 425 423 Consequences of the material scission of a lineage. When fraction A' of lineage A emigrates and goes to settle on the land of another village, B, which cedes a portion of land to it, the members of fraction A', thus separated, keep all their rights over the land from which they originally came. But the reverse is not true: the people who remained in the village of origin of the lineage (A) have no right over the land ceded to the A' out of B's territory.

At the end of a certain time, and especially if the lineage (B) had never really occupied the land granted, it is assumed that the lineage (A') is possessor of it without restriction.

This was the case for example of the fraction of the Dipélu II who left Kormotibo village about 1930 to establish themselves in Asisi near the Awara Bakka lineage. The Awara Bakka granted them some unoccupied lands near Asisi village in the Tapo locality. (462) This fraction, now numbering about 30 persons, considers that it has exclusive rights over these lands where the Kormotibo people cannot come to farm, but it has lost nothing as regards its rights over Kormotibo soil.

6:Herskovits--139 K-5 (1948-1954) 1961 583 Bush Negroes 583 Boni

/96 cont./

423 613 621

--The principle of matrilocal grouping is effectively applied in nearly all cases. The matrilineages have almost all formed, according to this principle, separate finages, on which their rights are well established; most of these lands appear to be of old formation;

423 613 621 591

--The lineage fractions which have separated themselves geographically from their original grouping have formed finages over which their members exercise exclusive rights. For example, out of the lands of the Dipélu II fraction settled in Asisi not a single case is reported of use by members of the main fraction of the lineage living in Kormotibo;

--The inhabitants of a village subject to one authority possess collective rights over the lands of that village and form a de facto community, even if they belong to different lineages. We have found two characteristic examples of this, Bonaville and Asisi-Awara Bakka; by coming to live in a village and subjecting oneself to the authority of the head, one enters ipso facto into this community.

This custom is in contradiction with the principle of the exclusive rights of the lineage over the soil, but the contradiction is more apparent than real; it makes possible the integration, into a collectivity, of detached persons and small fractions incapable of forming a separate village.

The actual situation thus created is not at all permanent. If a lineage fraction wishes to separate itself either as a consequence of a disagreement or simply because its numbers have grown sufficiently, it always has the right to do so.

The fundamental principles of the basic rights of the Boni can thus be summarized thus:

"Rights over the soil are joint within the fraction of a lineage whose members live in the same village and are subject to the same authority; any scission of a lineage which has to do with the residence village entails a scission of rights over lands. The

Silberzahn--140 K-6 (1948-1958) 1961 SRS Bush Negroes: SRS Boni

/94 cont./

973 213 621 571 241 423 213 621

emigrating fraction possesses exclusive rights over the /agricultural/ land /terroir/ it farms. But it does not lose, at least in principle, its rights over its original land /terroir/."

The study of lineages gives us still more important information concerning the exercising of rights of use:

/97/ Of 100 clearings examined, 81 follow the normal process according to which the woman has her clearing made on the land of her lineage (1). Of these 81 clearings, 14 had been

1. For the joint owners of Bonfville, the inhabitants of the village were considered as users of rights without distinction of lineage.

made under conditions not made clear, 48 had been cut by the husband, 14 by a near relative (son, brother, exceptionally brother or son-in-law), five by the woman herself.

In only five cases it is, on the contrary, the man who brings his wife onto his lineage's land.

A little more frequent is the case of a man cutting a clearing for himself on his lineage's land.

Finally, the case in which, for reasons of convenience, a member of a lineage asks to work temporarily on the land of another lineage is met twice. Thus this is an extremely unusual practice.

182 171 (199)

Influence of the geographical environment on the social structure. These observations are to be compared with the ones that can be made about the Cayana Indians and the Indians of Guiana in general, living near the Refugee Blacks, in the same geographical environment and almost in the same way (let us recall that the Refugee Blacks borrowed the whole of their material culture from the Indians).

/111 cont./

621 591 183 The composition of this village is thus entirely aberrant from the point of view of /112/ custom, and founded entirely upon personal fellow feeling. But the customary rule is most 621 613 423 the less present in the thought of all: the founder being of the Dju lineage, the land belongs to the Dju. The fact, for example, that Bernardin (Kenika) and his daughters (Papalmon) have worked there for a very long time creates no right at all for either lineage.

(591) If dissensions occur in the group, those outside the Dju lineage must leave.

24 621 423 Listing of some clearings of the Atikati habitation (west bank).

No.		Last User	Year	By What Right	Duration of Last Fallow Period
23	△	Atikati (Dju, E18) for himself	1952	founder of the habitation	2 years (cut for the 1st time in 1950)
24	○	Wiškimina (Pl, Fl); clearing cut by her husband Bésu	1955	Atikati's daughter, has no rights over the land	cut for the 1st time
25	○	Wiškimina; clearing cut by her father Atikati	1951	id.	id.

/131/

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858
613 Recapitulation:

70% of the boys
69% of the girls are raised in the mother's lineage

27% of the boys
13% of the girls are raised in the father's lineage

3% of the boys
2% of the girls are raised by outsiders to both lineages.

429
858
562 It is important, moreover, to emphasize in what proportion the children are brought up by women or men:

67% of the boys
86% of the girls are raised by women

33% of the boys
12% of the girls * are raised by men.

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562
577 This preponderant role of women in the education of the children is one of the fundamental aspects of the social structure of the Refugee Blacks. In fact, women consider that the children belong to them, and if they give some to men to bring up, it is only as many as they wish to. This conception which is found to be widespread among the Blacks of America, in the West Indies as in Guiana, explains, much more than the frequency of divorces, the impossibility for them to make up patrilineages in the absence of coercion exerted upon the women.

(191)

429 Several important pieces of information may still be drawn from these tables:

d:\forault--302 K-5 (1948-1956) 1961 SR6 Bush Negroes SR8
Boni

/197 cont./

The rites of the worship of Odun are known only by the grand man and by an old man who replaces him when he travels. They are practiced only on the occasion of the collective oath against witi, renewed every two or three years, and when it is necessary to implore Odun's mercy toward an offender. The officiant bathes the latter's body with a maceration of leaves that he alone knows.

To question Odun and know whether he pardons, they make use of a sacred object named afalaku, placed on a board put on the heads of two men. The answers yes and no are deduced by interpretation of the movements of the bearers, as in the interrogation of the dead.

The oath before Odun is also practiced as a legal test, permitting a man unjustly accused of theft or any misdeed whatever to justify himself.

This, in November, 1959, B... of Asisi, accused by two Djuka of being responsible for the burning of a large cabin /carbet/ in which objects of value were stored, asked to justify himself before Odun.

Odun's laws, which have the effect of forbidding violence, vengeance, and every form of oppression, give to the society of the Refugee Blacks a unique atmosphere of dignity and serenity which is not found to the same degree in animistic African societies. Most African societies censure sorcery and murder, but they accept vengeance and various forms of oppression. It is probable that the men who, two or three centuries ago, deep in the forests of Surinam, developed these laws, were inspired more or less consciously by Christian ideas; but they introduced them into an African system of thought, associating them with the idea of material sanctions in the present life, without which they would have been powerless.

/198 cont./
169 old woman of 90. A.... who died in Asisi in January. 1957.
784 Having lived with Creoles in her youth, she had come back to live in her native village for at least 30 years and had never given occasion for any unfavorable remark. Nevertheless, upon her death it appeared that she had witi.

791 Attitude toward Christianity. The Refugee Blacks, who are
829 acquainted better than one might believe with the conceptions
199 of the populations in the midst of whom they live, have a clear feeling of the relationship which exists between their metaphysical and moral conceptions and those of Christianity. They think they worship the same god as the Christians, in a com-
[799] pletely different way but just as sound. They have no animosity whatever toward the Catholic and Protestant clergy, and most of them agree willingly to wearing crosses or medals. But they have not the least intention of abandoning their beliefs for that. They do not perceive the contradiction and do not understand that people might want to oblige them to choose.

851 Like the Creole gold miners, they attach great importance
191 to baptism, considered as an this protective against the dangers
165 of the bush. On Christmas, 1957 they were strongly impressed
799 by the accidental death of a Djuka Christian living at the
[688] Kotika school. He refused to observe mourning for his wife according to the custom of the Refugee Blacks, and used to go
[813] to drink in the cabarets of the Creole villages. On Christmas
[784] evening, when drunk, he drowned himself. That was attributed to a superhuman punishment. We heard /199/ the following reflection on this subject: "He was baptized and he drowned himself just the same. That is therefore not worth the trouble."

61 Actually, the matrilineal structure of the Refugee Blacks
581 and their conception of marriage form an irreducible cleavage,
591 which appears immediately as soon as one leaves the metaphysical conceptions to pass to the plane of practical living.

Hoffmann--344 K-9 (1948-1958) 1961 SEE Bush Negroes: SEE Boni

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Relations between Gods and Men

The kunu

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The kunu. The Refugee Blacks call kunu the collective curse which has weighed on a matrilineage since an ancient offense. The kunu is without time limit, without pardon, without pity, blind in the choice of its victims; in principle, it can end only with the complete extermination of the lineage. Each time [953] [961] that adversity swoops down on one of its members in the form of death, sickness, various calamities, the kunu is the most frequently obtained explanation. The instrument of this inexpiable vengeance is either a god or the yaka (spirit) of a dead person.

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This notion, which occupies a central position in the beliefs of the Refugee Blacks, does not appear to have been borrowed directly. Most of the populations of Dahomey /222/ and the Ivory Coast take for granted the idea of arbitrary punishments exercised upon the members of the lineage by the gods or the ancestors of the group. But no population of these regions has, to our knowledge, developed so highly systematized a doctrine.

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The conceptions developed by the Refugee Blacks, divinities impelled exclusively by vengeance, and especially ancestors inexorably chastising lineages other than their own, have created new relationships among individuals and among lineages.

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We have not been able to elucidate the origin of the word kunu. Perhaps it is a deformation of the Fõnia word ekunu, which means burial.

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Three categories of divinities can pursue men with their kunu, and because of this fact the Refugee Blacks feel toward them an extreme terror mixed with veneration.

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The various works treating of the Bafoulen Dogons point out well the importance of the kuna, but it seems to us that the functioning of this institution (for in fact a social institution is certainly concerned here) has not been clearly understood.

A kuna is attached to a matrilineage in the literal sense (Dieterlen 1941). It extends obligatorily to all the members of the matrilineage and can strike only them.

For example, my kuna can strike my sister's son but not my wife nor my children (they are subject to the kuna of their own lineage). /Page/

The kuna, striking the lineage as a whole, can be appeased only by prayers uniting (at least in principle) the whole lineage. That is the aspect in which the kuna may be defined as a social institution, for it is, we shall see, the principal cement holding the groups together.

The misdeeding of a kuna does not necessarily and immediately follow the destruction of a sanctuary or the death of a dogowe male. The god thus offended avenges itself by making a certain number of members of the lineage sick and by causing limited misfortunes to happen. When things are at that point the kuna can still be exorcised by prayers and offerings. In 1937 the beginning of a kuna was manifesting itself thus in the Awara Sakka lineage of Aimi; very frightened, the members of the lineage made offerings and prayers to exorcise it.

But if the lineage people neglect the warnings of the god, if through laziness or selfishness too great a number of them are absent from the collective prayers and do not take part in the offerings, prayers and offerings will be refused and the god will kill one of them. From then on the kuna is unleashed and can no longer leave the lineage. Its involuntary bearer will have to bequeath it upon his death to a member of the lineage, who cannot refuse this legacy and must immediately

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One sees from this example how the influence of women, exerted in arbitrary fashion, in a domain placed outside of custom and ordinary social life, weighs on the life of the group.

Kunu of the Dipélo lineage. The[illegible]ration of the Dipélo lineage with respect to the kunu is particularly interesting. Although split for perhaps 100 years into two separate groups, Dipélo I (L'Enfant Perdu and Apatu villages) and Dipélo II (Kermentibo and Anni-Dip. II villages), this group still constitutes an associated unit with respect to the kunu. Neither time nor distance (it takes more than a week of traveling to make the round trip between L'Enfant Perdu and Apatu) has been able to break it up. The Apatu people come very often (at least some of them) to be present at the collective prayers which take place at L'Enfant Perdu to appease a kunu in order to cure a sick person.

The oldest kunu ("since Africa") is that of a Papa gods girl whose name was ○ Jika (Dip. I. D10, † 1911) and which passed after her death into ○ Pélétum (Dip. I. E42, L'Enfant Perdu village). This kunu strikes indiscriminately the people of L'Enfant Perdu, Apatu, Kermentibo, Anni-Dip. II, and the Dipélo fraction residing in Bonoville. To it, these past years, have been attributed the death of ○ Way (Dip. I. E8, living in Bonoville), the illness of △ Akwah (Dip. II. F7, Kermentibo village) and of ○ Bongo (same village).

Another very old kunu is the one exercised by the yaka of a Sarakaca Creole who had settled with the Dipélo people a very long time ago. He was suspected of sorcery and killed. Since then his yaka comes back regularly to exterminate the Dipélo.

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784 613 [428] The kunu and Boni family life. It follows from the detailed examination we have just made of the situation of the various lineages that the transmission of the kunu within the uterine kin group is a rigorous law which suffers no exception whatever. [571] [602] The process of assimilation which permits in a certain measure, on the social plane, the integration of fragments of paternal kin (like Awara Bakka 3) into a group does not come into play here. [611] [829] Unity with respect to the kunu can therefore be regarded as a rigorous criterion of a common matrilineal origin. The Boni feel it as an obvious fact and in such a case it is the proof that comes to their minds: "We are of the same origin since we have the same kunu."

784 613 571 182 Thus the kunu appears as the principal cement of the unity of the groups. It opposes the dissociation of the lineages; this curse which weighs collectively upon a group and which can be exorcised only collectively is an iron bond which nothing can break. It obliges the Refugee Blacks to surmount their individualistic tendencies, their egoism which, if they acted freely, would soon have scattered them into a dust of [888] separate persons. In the face of adversity each one accepts with good grace obedience to the elders, who alone know how [692] to talk to the gods and appease them. Nobody ever is indignant or even surprised to be struck down for the offense of another; there is not a movement of revolt or hostility against the one who by his inattention or inconsiderateness has brought on misfortune. On this plane the members of a lineage feel like cells of a single body.

784 613 672 The collective legal responsibility of the members of a group in the domain of customary law flows from the kunu. We have observed that several times, notably at the time of the obsequies for Kotoïda (Afi lineage) in October, 1956. The president of the lanti kuutu condemned the members of

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In a general way, they consider that the bearer of a god exercising the kunu has nothing to fear from it personally if he rigorously observes the kina which have been imposed upon him. On the other hand, this god will punish any injury to its bearer. Thus these bearers (almost always old women) live surrounded by respect and fear.

/233/ Observations in January, 1958 (misfortunes attributed to vengeance of ancestors on their own lineage).

Do (Lapé) is taken ill on January 7, 1958 with a violent attack of dysentery. The same day his five-year-old son is grievously hurt at the wharf by falling on a broken bottle. Alarmed by this coincidence, the members of the Lapé lo assemble and proceed to question a possessed person. The latter reveals that it is the doing of an old woman of the lineage, Atala, dead for two years. Several lineage members have already been sick from this; the dead woman wanted to sanction offenses committed by the people of the lineage.

The same day in Boniville, Klémenti (Dju), to whom I am recounting this affair, tells me that before the lifting of mourning for his mother Béniti, he and his sisters were sick. Divination showed that it was the doing of Béniti, who wished to hasten the celebration of the ceremony.

The kunu and social peace among the Boni. Role of the grand man. The kunu exercised by a yɔrka creates very strange relations among the Boni lineages. As blind and arbitrary as the vengeance attributed to the yɔrka may be, the Boni have the sense of the legal unity of the lineage too much for any resentment to exist: "They are killing our family..."; and yet the two lineages find themselves henceforth irreparably bound together. The victims of the kunu can no longer get along without people of the lineage of the yɔrka which pursues them with its vengeance, since they alone, by their prayers, can appease temporarily the anger of their ancestor. One conceives of the

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787 But divination is more than that; the interpretation it
622 gives of the events of daily life is the very mover of the ani-
182 mistic society; presenting calamities /236/ as the punishment
• 571 of offenses against customary law, it is constantly vitalizing that law, conserving its practical value and its efficacity. What it expresses is not the hidden influence of chiefs or priests -- there are in fact neither chiefs nor priests among the Boni -- but the very consensus of the group, the deep feeling it has of its unity.

787 There are two large categories of divination:

The first consists of calling on a divinity through the medium of its bearer. For that, one applies to a person (of his [791] lineage if possible) who has a gadu. This is a service which is rarely refused. This person employs the appropriate procedure for calling his gita and enters into trances. The god speaks, the question is put to it; if it is well disposed, it may give the explanation or the advice requested. For example, one asks for advice before looking for another sector to make his clearings.

787 Suggestible as the Boni may be, they do not fail to per-
796 ceive that all the gods interrogated do not give the same directions. So they think that certain ones are stronger than others; there are people whose gita is considered to be particularly [791] good, others whom they have stopped consulting entirely. The defunct head of Kotika village, Bayo, used to have a gita so remarkable that people would come from very far to consult it.

[829] The general opinion is, furthermore, that nowadays
[178] everything is degenerating and that good gita are no longer seen as in the olden days.

787 These consultations involve only a very modest remuner-
[791] ation, a bottle of tafia at most (1). If it is not a matter of a

1. The remuneration of the possessed person is in question; the god always demands a payment for itself, of variable size according to its whim.

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Jealousy. To speak of jealousy as a negative magic force is not to be false to the thought of the Refugee Blacks. They regard it as an attenuated force of wisi, capable of bringing misfortunes even if no sorcery has been formulated. Jealousy is very marked in their character, associated with an individualism verging on asocial tendencies. When somebody is accused of wisi, jealousy is the commonest explanation of the crimes attributed to him; it is thought for example that a man can be jealous of his brother's growing rich to the point of making him die; that a woman may be jealous of the beauty or health of her sister's children. Not laying themselves open to jealousy is the constant preoccupation of the Refugee Blacks; one observes it in daily behavior, for example in the greetings which they exchange on the river. They never say, "I am well," but: "I feel only fair." If they come back from hunting they say, "I found a little."

Examples are not lacking of people who avoid building a fine house or buying an outboard motor in order not to give cause for jealousy. This preoccupation has profound repercussions on the material life and the economy of the Refugee Blacks; it explains in particular the absence of specialized professions and trade among them.

Many aspects of the customary law of the Refugee Blacks have no other function than to exorcise, if one may say so, tendencies toward jealousy and selfishness which, if they were given free rein, would poison the life of the collectivity.

The rites of death and mourning, which we have shown to constitute the pivot of the social life of the Refugee Blacks, are entirely based on the idea of preserving the surviving spouse from the effect of the jealousy of the deceased.

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171 image of the world. Since magic practices are rejected by
179 religion, since it even denies their reality, one does not think,
182 when one finds oneself constrained to have recourse to them,
754 of transferring to them the notion of good and evil which it teaches. Black magic gets in almost inevitably because a person believes he must defend himself; then its use becomes habitual, and the two forms of magic end up by mixing together and being no longer regarded as fundamentally different from each other.

171 Cases of wisi and Boni customary law. In African villages,
754 cases of sorcery are interpreted by interminable and useless
695 discussions, wild accusations, protestations of innocence, sometimes more or less sincere confessions, oaths and legal tests with always contested results. These cases are never finished; they are in permanent evolution, sometimes for months and years. Opinion moves successively onto different hypotheses according to events which take place, seeking its way gropingly like a man lost in darkness.

754 It is clear that the first lawgivers of the Refugee Blacks,
695 by carrying judgment back to the death of those concerned and
182 by refusing the wisimã any kind of pardon or compromise, tried to prevent the development of these sad crises. What is the use of discussing interminably, since there is no certain proof, and since nobody may confess? But customary law collides on this point with tendencies too deep to be entirely restrained. The laws of Odun are not always obeyed to the letter, and it happens sometimes that the Boni lose their footing in the
[571] observance of their customary law. Then crises take place among them, as violent and confused as in the villages of Black Africa, going as far as paralyzing social life for several weeks; then peace returns for several months, sometimes for several years.

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754 695 571 In 1958, a Boniville woman, N..., was convicted of having paid a Creole quimboiseur to make the grand man die. She confessed, a rare thing in this kind of case, and the materiality of the facts did not appear doubtful. The Boni were strongly impressed by this unprecedented event, and for several weeks the members of the lineage concerned were in such agitation that one could have believed they had lost their reason. In Boniville they "held court" continually for nearly two months, and they discussed so much that farm work was neglected and part of the rice crop lost.

754 695 683 [648] What were they going to do with this woman? The laws of Odun forbade killing her, no more could she be expelled. The Boni made discreet overtures to the administration to find out whether it was not possible to have her imprisoned. They were surprised to learn that French law does not recognize the offense of sorcery. Somebody then proposed having her admitted as a servant at the leprosarium of the Acarouani on the /245/ coast. This suggestion produced a surprising result; the Boni were unanimous in thinking that making someone who was not a leper live in a leprosarium was a punishment worse than death, and they resolved to pardon her.

How does one go about it, since the laws of Odun do not permit pardoning a wisimã? Nobody could give us a satisfactory justification on this, but in 1959 A..., the preceding year spurned and maltreated, had taken up normal living again in her village.

754 76 784 In fact, a case of wisi is terminated only upon the death of the person concerned. If a man who has been accused of wisi during his lifetime dies accidentally, or is struck by a fulminating sickness, the fact that he has been chastised by Odun appears as incontestable proof. The case is fixed in the memory of the group in a specific form and will be given as an example to inspire respect for customary law.

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426 here, 5,000 there. But these loans are never large and do not constitute an effective process for grouping financial assets.

150 525 The so-called subscription societies so common in Black Africa are totally contrary to the thinking of the Refugee Blacks, in the same way as games of chance. In 1958 the Maripasoula post, on the occasion of a festival, had organized a tombola. When the principle of it was explained to the Boni, they were unanimous in thinking that the Europeans had odd amusements. Few of them agreed to buy tickets, and the ones who had not won anything left embittered, with the feeling of having been involved in an immoral operation.

157 571 High esteem attached to contracts. This inaptitude for forming groups and combining assets contributes very much toward crystallizing the society of the Refugee Blacks in its present form by opposing all large-scale initiative. On the other hand, 157 577 426 it develops the sense of personal responsibility. The Refugee Blacks are especially strict with respect to money (1).

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1. This with regard to their mutual relations; as for debts to Europeans, they are not prompt in paying them back; but marked deception, borrowing done for the purpose of swindling, are very rare with the Refugee Blacks.

[829] Custom lays down as a strict principle that everything must be paid for. No one may live at the expense of someone [613] else, no one may borrow without paying back. If a man died before repaying a debt, the members of his lineage would club together to pay it off.

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695 461 157 The Refugee Blacks have a sense of contract to a high degree, and they bring /291/ to the execution of work to which they have committed themselves qualities of seriousness, initiative, and a sense of duty not found to the same degree in Black Africa.

157 671 571 Refusal of any lasting commitment. If the Refugee Blacks honor their contracts, they do not like to commit themselves for a long period.

This attitude results from their desire for independence, but also from the moral and religious law which governs their society.

This law forbids infringing on the liberty of persons, humiliating anyone, and doing anything which might be able to plunge him into anger or affliction. Its effect is to prevent any exploitation of the weak, any creation of a servant or proletarian caste. It even leads to the absence of any permanent subordination of one man to another.

[466] The desire for independence of the Refugee Blacks makes them unwilling to bind themselves definitively to a job, however profitable. When a man judges that he has put aside sufficient savings, he leaves the job which furnished him with these resources.

[464] This tendency makes the search for paid work much more difficult and hazardous; it happens that a man may stay for years without finding gainful work, living in straitened circumstances. But that is the price of independence, and it is accepted without hesitation.